

Boston, April 12, 1875.

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Gentlemen:

For the cordial invitation to me in behalf of the citizens of Concord "to be present as their guest on the 19th of this month, and to join with them in celebrating the centennial anniversary of the opening of the Revolutionary War," I return my sincere thanks to them and to yourselves. Circumstances, however, will prevent my attendance.

The event to be commemorated, though only a local skirmish, bore such a relation to the struggle for American Independence as will forever invest it with historical interest and importance. Probably it was not given to any of those who participated in it to foresee what would be the consequences, beyond the peril of the hour and the lia-

bility to seal with their blood
their resistance to tyrannical
dominion; but to them suffic-
ient unto the day was ~~success~~
failure or success, obscurity
or renown. They were not battling
for fame, but for freedom,
and whether their patriotic
uprising should afterwards
be deemed to possess only a
local significance, or whether
it should prove, as it did,
what the early dawn is to
the coming day, they knew
not and could not. One
purpose at least animated their
breasts: it was to be enrolled
among

"Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and, knowing, dare
maintain,
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they read the chain."

There are, indeed, various methods of
availing oppression and maintaining the
cause of liberty. As an advocate of peace,
in a very radical sense, it would not be
consistent for me to glory in the shedding of
human blood, however deniable the end
in view; yet in every conflict (however
sanguinary) between the oppressors and the
oppressed, - force against force, - all my
sympathies, hopes and best wishes have been,
and will continue to be, with the down-
trodden side. Men cannot exceed their
convictions of duty; and if, in reducing
them to practice, - though there may be
a higher plane of action not yet at-
tained and nobler instrumentalities
to be used, - there is shown a readiness

to confront death itself in the service of freedom, they will be sure to have their self-sacrificing spirit crowned with respect & honor by mankind.

It is an easy matter to celebrate the deeds of such, and to be proud of them as ancestors. To make the occasion worthy of us, there should be drawn from it an admonitory lesson to chasten our exultation; lessons of justice not yet enforced, of equal rights still denied, of national unity not yet attained. The Dec. of Ind. still remains to be carried out in its fundamental principles and "self-evident truths." True, the atrocious system of chattel slavery has been abolished, and its victims nominally admitted to citizenship, but they still need to have their rights protected, and to be put in possession of all those privileges & immunities which

are accorded even to aliens and foreigners on our soil. Moreover, in persistently denying to one half of our people (solely on the ground of sex) all political power, all representation in legislative and municipal assemblies, all voice in the enactment and administration of the laws, and classifying them in an opprobrious manner, we are trampling under ~~foot~~ foot our own Heaven-attested declaration, that "governments derive," &c. and, in imitation of the mother country under George III. imposing taxation but denying the right of representation. This great injustice must be removed.

Very respectfully yours,
W. L. G.

[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text on lined paper. The text appears to be a letter or a journal entry, with some words like "I have", "I am", and "I wish" visible. There is a small red mark or correction in the middle of the page.]